

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5730
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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FOR SCS AND AF/C

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC (DIAN FOSSEY)
SUBJECT: FOSSEY RETURNS TO VISOKE AFTER WINNING GOR SUPPORT

REF KIGALI 156 (NOTAL)

1. DR. FOSSEY SPENT SIX DAYS IN KIGALI VERY EFFECTIVELY
PATCHING UP RELATIONS WITH GOR AUTHORITIES AND BELGIAN
ADVISERS AND WINNING NEW SUPPORT FOR HER EFFORTS TO
PROTECT MOUNTAIN GORILLAS. IN LENGTHY MEETINGS AT
PRESIDENCY (WITH AMRI SUED) AND AT TOURISM OFFICE (WITH
DIRECTOR NSABIMANA AND BELGIAN ADVISERS), SHE OBTAINED
FURTHER COMMITMENT THAT GOR WOULD PURSUE AND PUNISH
THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR DEATH OF "DIGIT" AND OTHER MOUNTAIN
GORILLAS. FOSSEY IN TURN AGREED TO COOPERATE
FULLY WITH GOR IN EFFORTS TO PRESERVE PARK LANDS FROM
ILLEGAL ENCROACHMENTS AND TO UPGRADE PARK MANAGEMENT
ACTIVITIES.

2. AT RECEPTION LAST NIGHT FOR "TARGETS" IN MINISTRIES OF
AGRICULTURE AND PLAN, PRESIDENCY, AND TOURISM OFFICE, FOSSEY
SHOWED ENGLISH VERSION OF NEW "WILD KINGDOM" FILM ABOUT
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HER WORK AND ABOUT PROBLEMS GOR FACES IN PRESERVING
PARK LANDS. ALSO PRESENT WERE MRND SEC GEN HABIMANA AND
PROFESSOR (EX-GOVERNOR GENERAL) JEAN-PAUL HARROY.
FILM WAS AGAIN EXTREMELY WELL RECEIVED AND FOSSEY'S WORK
APPLAUDED. AMBASSADOR PROMISED NSABIMANA HE WOULD DO
EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN FRENCH VERSION FOR
EDUCATIONAL SHOWING AMONG TOURISM AND APRK OFFICIALS.

IN SEPARATE LONG CONVERSATION, HARROY PROMISED TO USE HIS CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE WITH PRESIDENT TO IMPRESS UPON HIM NEED FOR EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO CONTROL POACHINGS AND ENCROACHMENTS. HABIMANA (FORMER JUSTICE MINISTER), FOR HIS PART, SAID CONVICTED POACHERS SHOULD BE "HANGED," MUCH TO FOSSEY'S DELIGHT.

3. AT NSABIMANA'S REQUEST, FOSSEY PREPARED DETAILED PAPER DESCRIBING GORILLAS' DEPENDENCE ON PARK BAMBOO FORESTS, WHICH MINAGRI WAS CONTEMPLATING TAKING OVER FOR CATTLE GRAZING PROJECT. NSABIMANA AS WELL AS MINAGRI OFFICIAL PRESENT AT LAST NIGHT'S FILM SHOWING AGREED THAT HER DOCUMENTATION WAS PROBABLY SUFFICIENT TO QUASH PROJECT.

4. IN COOPERATION, AGAIN WITH NSABIMANA, FOSSEY HAS ALSO DRAWN UP "ACTION PLAN" FOR MORE EFFECTIVE PARK GUARD SERVICE WHICH SHE HAS PRESENTED TO EMBASSY FOR POSSIBLE JOINT FINANCING WITH GOR. PLAN PROVIDES FOR HER TO TRAIN FIVE YOUNG AMERICANS IN ECOLOGICAL SKILLS, WHO IN TURN WOULD TRAIN AT LEAST ANOTHER TEN RWANDANS TO BECOME PARK GUARDS. EXPENSES INVOLVED INCLUDE BUILDING FIVE SMALL CAMPSITES (ONE ON ACH VOLCANO IN PARK), PROVIDING AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS (POSSIBLE PCV'S) THROUGH SMITHSONIAN), AND EQUIPPING AMERICAN AND RWANDAN TRAINEES. GOR WOULD PROVIDE SALARIES AND MAINTENANCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR THE RWANDANS AND INSURE THEIR INTEGRATION INTO PARK SERVICE. SEPTTEL WILL PROVIDE DETAILS.

5. COMMENT: BELIEVE FOSSEY HAS SUCCEEDED IN TURNING VERY DELICATE AND POTENTIALLY DISASTROUS SITUATION TO HER ADVANTAGE AND THAT OF MOUNTAIN GORILLAS. SHE HAS NOT RPT NOT PERSUADED GOR THAT POACHERS SHOULD ALL RECEIVE DEATH PENALTY, BUT SHE HAS FIRM COMMITMENTS THAT AUTHORITIES WILL TAKE EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO SUPPRESS POACHING AND ARE IN FACT ALREADY DOING SO. BY DEMONSTRATING WILLINGNESS TO COLLABORATE WITH AUTHORITIES AND BELGIAN ADVISERS, SHE HAS WIPED OUT MUCH OF THEIR SKEPTICISM AND WON CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT. THIS IN TURN HAS GIVEN FOSSEY RENEWED CONFIDENCE WHICH SHOULD HELP DAMP DOWN HER TENDENCY TO TAKE LAW INTO HER OWN HANDS.

6. ACTIONS REQUESTED:

(W) ADVISE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC AS APPROPRIATE THAT EVENTS HAVE TAKEN POSITIVE TURN SINCE FOSSEY'S ARRIVAL HERE.

(B) PLEASE CONTACT "WILD KINGDOM" AGAIN (KIGALI 155)
TO REITERATE REQUEST FOR FRENCH VERSION OF FILM,
WHICH EMBASSY BELIEVES WILL DO MUCH TO REINFORCE THIS
WEEK'S GAINS.
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